Morphological description of scorpion mud turtle (*Kinosternon scorpioides*) spermatozoon

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The scorpion mud turtle (Kinosternon scorpioides) is a small semi-aquatic turtle found in Brazil in the states of *Maranhao* and *Para*. The male reproductive system possesses a pair of oval shaped testis fixated by the mesorchium and mesocolon; a very convoluted epididymis of a whitish color, not directly inserted in the testis; deferential ducts continuous to the epididymis and a sulcated penis. This study intends to examine the morphological aspects of the scorpion mud turtle's spermatozoon as to contribute to the species' reproductive study aimed at its preservation. One adult male originally from Nucleus of Wild Animals Research and Preservation – NEPAS, was used under authorization by IBAMA-MA (license nº. 12866/1) and by the Comitê de Ética e Pesquisa of UEMA's Veterinary School. The animal was sedated with xylazine hydrochloride and ketamin hydrochloride, and euthanized with sodium thiopental administration at 2,5%. The turtle was dissected and semen was collected directly from the deferential ducts. Glass layers stained with hematoxylin-eosin were analyzed in optical microscopy at 100x. Results showed that the scorpion mud turtle's spermatozoon has a filiform shape. It possesses a pepper-shaped head, colum, intermediate piece and a tail divided in principal and terminal ends. The long thin head tapers itself as the nucleus ends, and this posterior portion is similar to the spermatozoon's own tail. It's conclusive that spermatozoon of Kinosternon scorpioides is morphologically similar to those of other Chelonians.

Keywords: spermatozoon; morphology; scorpion mud turtle.

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